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ABSTRACT

A survey packet designed for primary schools in the United Kingdom is provided to help schools establish site monitoring activities that help involve the entire school community in evaluating and maintaining school grounds. The packet helps the community collect information on how the grounds are used and by whom, how the grounds are maintained and whether they are in a good condition, and what image the grounds convey to those within and beyond the school community. The data collected can be used to manage sites effectively, provide basic information for site development, avoid destroying resources already acquired, recognize causes of problems, isolate features or practices that are unsafe, identify income-generating potential and possible savings, and avoid repetition of mistakes when undertaking site development. Concluding sections address analyzing and using survey information, curriculum links in surveying school grounds, an example of a site plan with special overlays, and lists of resources. (GR)

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ESSO SCHOOLWATCH SURVEY PACK

ESSO SCHOOLWATCH

SCHOOL GROUNDS DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT

Learning through LANDSCAPES

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2

ESSO SCHOOLWATCH SURVEY PACK

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LEARNING THROUGH LANDSCAPES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL GROUNDS

Learning through Landscapes (LTL) was established in 1990 as an independent charitable trust promoting improvements to the educational use and environmental quality of school grounds for the benefit of children. LTL has carried out considerable research into the benefits schools gain from developing their sites and has looked at why some developments are more effective than others.

School grounds are the one external environment to which nearly all children have regular access. Primary-aged children spend at least a quarter of their time in them during any one school day, more if they are used for teaching. They are vitally important childhood environments in which attitudes are formed and the *Esso Schoolwatch Survey Pack* is one of a group of resources for Primary school teachers (collectively known as the *LTL School Grounds Development Toolkit*), to help schools develop and make the most of this valuable resource.

LTL's research has shown that there are many benefits in developing school grounds including:

- the creation of additional resources which support and extend all aspects of the curriculum, enabling more effective teaching and learning outcomes;
- a reduction in accidents and incidents of boredom, bullying and vandalism;
- the development of an ethos of care, ownership and responsibility by the whole school community;
- improvements to the quality of the environment and, hence, to the appearance, image and popularity of the school.

LTL's research also shows that most successful developments result from a process of change which is:

- sustainable - involving the on-going consideration of the use, design, maintenance and management of school grounds;
- holistic - involving the whole site, the whole community and the whole curriculum, i.e. its formal, informal and hidden dimensions;
- participative - involving children with adults in all aspects.

How you go about the process of developing and using your school's grounds is critically important, probably far more so than what changes you actually make.

This process is further described in Table 1 on page 3.

TABLE 1

Managing the process of change

1 Share the idea

The first stage in the process of changing your grounds, and the way they are managed, is to share the idea with everyone who might get involved - staff, pupils, parents, governors and school board members. One person alone cannot be expected to make a project happen. Making sure everyone is involved from the start will help you to achieve the best results for your school, including the long-term use and maintenance of your site.

Ideas can be shared through meetings, presentations, displays and school newsletters.

2 Set up a management structure

Spread the load and share the vision by setting up a small management group and making sure that everyone has a clearly defined role. This will also help to keep enthusiasm going as the group members support each other.

A school grounds management group should involve the headteacher and should also contain a range of people including staff, parents and pupils.

3 Survey your site and how it is used

If you do not know what you have already you cannot be sure that changes will necessarily be for the better. In addition you need to find out whose permission you need before making any changes on site, what changes may be needed to your grounds maintenance contracts and whether you have any underground or overhead services on your site.

Involve the whole school in finding out what exists in your grounds, their size, how they are managed, how they are used and how people feel about them.

4 Establish your school's needs

You should consider all of the needs which your school grounds could meet, including formal curriculum needs such as new teaching resources, informal curriculum needs such as those of play and breaktime and hidden curriculum needs which include the messages that you want your grounds to convey to pupils, staff and parents as well as to neighbours, potential parents and visitors to your school. The best changes to make are those that satisfy most people.

*Ask pupils and staff what they would like to be able to **do** outside rather than what they would like to **have**, otherwise you can end up with a list of expensive items which may be of limited benefit.*

5 Identify possible solutions

Start to get ideas from the whole school community. The greater the involvement the greater the sense of ownership and the greater the likelihood that the changes you make will be a success and be sustained. Multi-use solutions that meet a number of needs can give you maximum returns for your money and management decisions such as investing in specialist training for teaching and supervisory staff can also bring rich rewards.

Use maps, plans, drawings, written examples, advice from specialist groups and visits to other school sites to involve the whole school community in prioritising needs so that final solutions suit your school.

6 Produce an action plan

This sets out who will do what, where and when and consist of documents, plans and models. It should not be seen as being set in stone, rather as a structure to work within. Identify the cost of proposed changes so that work can be divided up into manageable stages. The action plan will demonstrate that everyone's opinions have been considered and it will also provide a targeted wish list which will be easier to raise funds for.

Use the plan to show locations of proposed changes. Prepare detailed costings and plans for each phase as their start date approaches. Refer to documents and key individuals as necessary. Include targets for managerial changes.

7 Implement changes

You may wish to work with contractors or outside groups to make physical changes to the site but is important that pupils and staff are also involved. This will maintain enthusiasm and generate a sense of ownership which will be reflected in the way the site is used and looked after in the future. Safe working practices must always be explained and used. In terms of managerial changes you may hold whole-school training days or change the way play and breaktimes are times or managed.

Make those changes!

8 Monitor and evaluate the changes

Encourage feedback from pupils, staff and parents and see if any of the changes can be further improved. Do not be afraid to make changes in light of your evaluations as you progress. Monitor changes in behaviour, accidents, learning opportunities and attitudes towards the grounds and each other to see if the changes you have made give you the results you had hoped for.

Evaluating the changes can be a good way to involve new generations of pupils and staff in the on-going development of your grounds.

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TABLE 2

How your survey can be used during the process of changing your school grounds

If you are intending to develop your site, the information you will gather during the survey will be critical to many of the 8 stages of the LTL process for managing change in your school grounds. Table 2 demonstrates how the information gathered during site survey will be used at different stages of the LTL process of school site development, described in Table 1.

1 Share the idea	*The plans, photographs and comments that you gather during the survey can be used to raise awareness at parent meetings and school newsletters.*
2 Set up a management structure	
3 Survey your site and how it is used	
4 Establish your school's needs	*Some needs will have been mentioned during the survey.*
5 Identify possible solutions	*The detailed site plan will form the basis of discussions about possible solutions. Photographs taken during the survey can form the basis for photo-montage representations of possible solutions and help with consultations. Legal constraints or opportunities will have been identified during survey. Some solutions may be available immediately as a result of resources being identified during the survey.*
6 Produce an action plan	*The detailed site plan produced during the survey will be an integral part of the action plan. The names and addresses of those whose permission is needed will have been gathered during the survey.*
7 Implement changes	*Site plans produced during the survey will form the basis of working plans needed during implementation.*
8 Monitor and evaluate the changes	*Data, photographs and plans gathered during the survey will be a useful basis for your evaluation.*

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ENLARGE THIS MASTER TO A3 SIZE

INTRODUCTION

About the pack

This new *Esso Schoolwatch Survey Pack* is designed for Primary schools. As a result of the advice and feedback from hundreds of schools who undertook the original *Esso Schoolwatch Initial Survey*, produced in 1992, we have reduced and simplified the amount of information needed to undertake a successful survey.

With good preparation, the key activities of surveying what you have got in your school grounds, (Activities 4 and 5), can be completed in a day. Alternatively you may choose to spread it over a week, a half-term, a term or a year. The other aspects of site survey (surveying how your site is used and collecting information about what site users feel about your site) can usually be collected within a week, depending on the size of your school site and school roll.

Activities are coded to indicate whether they are relevant for pupils, adults or both. Those involving pupils are linked to the National Curriculum and the Scottish 5-14 Curriculum.

Completing the Esso Schoolwatch survey will give you the following information about your school grounds:

- the extent of what you own and/or are responsible for;
- how the grounds are currently used and by whom;
- how the grounds are maintained and whether they are in a good condition;
- what image the grounds convey to those within and beyond the school community.

This will enable you to:

- manage your site effectively;
- provide you with the basic information you require for site development;
- catalogue resources;
- avoid destroying resources you already have;
- recognise the causes of problems such as excessive wear and tear, other damage, accidents;
- isolate any features or practices which are unsafe;
- identify income-generating potential eg through effective management of lettings;
- identify possible savings;
- avoid repetition of mistakes when undertaking site development.

Furthermore, by involving pupils in the site survey you will be:

- encouraging ownership for the site (and any subsequent developments);
- providing real life settings for curriculum attainment.

The Pack is designed to engage and involve the whole school community - pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and governors. Schools have reported that the involvement of each of these groups is essential if a real sense of ownership is to be achieved and if new developments are to meet the needs of schools.

Managing your survey

Involving everyone requires effective management and coordination. Ideally this should be the responsibility of one individual - perhaps a teacher, governor, school board member or interested parent. Table 3 provides an outline of the survey, the tasks involved and key outcomes. It can be used as an OHP as part of an initial meeting.

TABLE 3

Summary of survey activities and outcomes

Preliminary activities (Activities 1 - 3)

1	Preparing a base plan
2	Producing a site services plan (gas, electricity etc)
3	Identifying legal and maintenance issues relating to your site
OUTCOME	A simple base plan of the school grounds and a collection of relevant legal and policy documents.

Survey of features in your school grounds (Activities 4 - 5)

4	Collecting data about site features
5	Recording and sharing what has been found
OUTCOME	A detailed school grounds plan which includes all the features present on site.

Survey of use of your school grounds (Activities 6 - 9)

6	Surveying formal curriculum use
7	Surveying informal curriculum use
8	Surveying extra-curricular and community use
9	Recording and sharing what has been found
OUTCOME	Detailed records of how the school grounds are used and a reference plan showing which areas are used for which activities.

Canvassing opinions about your school grounds (Activities 10 - 12)

10	Getting the views of your pupils
11	Getting the views of school staff
12	Getting the views of your parents, governors or school board members
OUTCOME	A better understanding of how people feel about the site.

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About the Activities

Each Section begins with an **Introduction** and some suggestions for **Additional activities** particularly relevant for schools planning to develop their school grounds.

Each **Activity** contains the following:

- **Aim** of the activity;
- **Teachers notes** to provide further background information and an indication of whether the activity is designed for use by adults, children or both;
- **Tasks** which include one or more steps or methods for completing the activity;
- **Photocopiable masters** of any questionnaires mentioned during the activity;
- **Useful Hints** are included where these can help with the smooth running of the activity.

The order in which these activities are completed varies from school to school. Some schools may complete each section before beginning the next. The order followed in this pack is derived from LTL's experience of what schools prefer.

So, the survey of features, **(Activities 4 - 5)** and survey of use, **(Activities 6 - 9)** helps teachers and pupils to have a better understanding of the physical nature of their grounds. This, in turn, may lead to better pupil consultation, **(Activity 10),** and more effective adult involvement, **(Activities 10 - 11).**

Some schools may feel that, because the exercise of canvassing opinions **(Activities 10 - 12)** motivates the school community to find our more about the school site, it should be completed first.

Others may choose to amalgamate **Activities** so that when they are surveying, for example, the playing fields, they look at features, use and opinions at the same time.

The important factor about survey is that the **whole** site is covered, that **all** uses are recorded and that **everyone** has an opportunity to be involved.

Safety

Obviously, if an issue relating to Health and Safety is raised, this will need to be reported to the headteacher and dealt with promptly. In addition, as some activities may involve groups working in remote areas of the school, the headteacher needs to be confident that the adults involved are capable and trustworthy and that the ratios of adults to pupils will ensure pupil safety.

PRELIMINARY ACTIVITIES

Introduction to Activities 1 - 3

As a result of completing these activities you will:

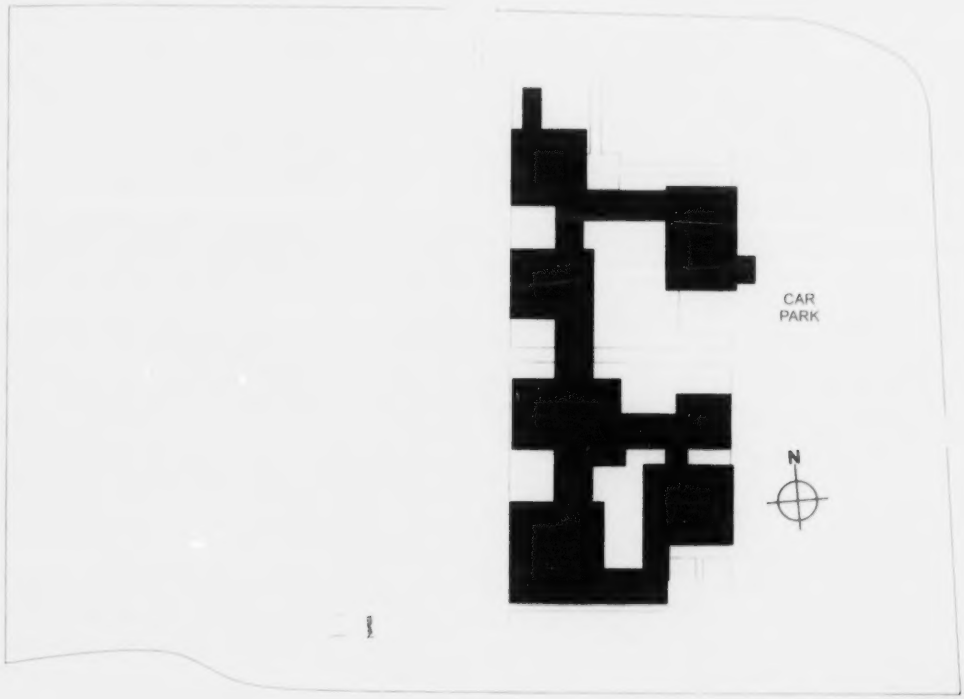
- clarify site ownership and responsibilities;
- identify the individuals and groups in your local authority and your local community who have some link with your school grounds and their maintenance;
- produce a simple base plan, drawn to scale and showing the location of all the major features and services such as gas, electricity etc (see Table 4 - reduced size).

Additional activities

Having completed this section you may like to consider the following additional activities which, although not vital, could provide you with further valuable information about your grounds:

1. Research the history of your school site and the immediate vicinity, looking for evidence of former land use, locally distinctive activities or features.
2. Survey current surrounding land use, as this may affect future plans for site development.
3. Identify and consult local groups (local history groups, local environmental groups, colleges etc) who may be able to help you with later stages of survey or site development.

TABLE 4 Example of simple base plan (reduced)



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ACTIVITY 1

Adults

Preparing a base plan

Aim

To make a base plan, drawn to scale, of your school which shows basic details concerning the buildings and grounds. See Table 15.

Teachers Notes

Although pupils can be involved in sourcing and obtaining all the relevant documents it is likely that the first steps, obtaining a plan and making copies, are done by a member of staff, a governor, a school board member, or an interested parent. Pupils can then be involved in other aspects, such as checking scale and content for accuracy.

Tasks

Step 1 – Obtaining a plan of your site

It is very likely that you will be able to obtain a plan of your site which shows the boundaries and possibly the buildings from one of the following sources:

- Local authority - Property/Planning/Landscape/Education/Leisure and Recreation departments usually store such plans.
- Grounds maintenance contractor - a plan may accompany your grounds maintenance contract.
- Ordnance Survey - OS maps are available through local education authorities (which have permission to copy them) or from your local library and can provide you with an outline plan. Remember to ask about any copyright restrictions that may apply. Every authority should have a designated OS Liaison Officer who will be able to help you.
- Aerial photographs - if you have an aerial photograph of the school which was taken looking straight down and not at an angle, it can be used as a basis for a plan by tracing over it, with great care so as to avoid damaging the picture itself. In addition, many local authorities undertake an aerial land use survey as part of their census and the area relating to your school may be available.

Step 2 – Checking or putting a scale on your plan

It is very important that plans are drawn to a known scale as this will prove crucial when you look in more detail at the site or when you consider the location and extent of any future developments. Even if the plan you obtain has a scale, it is wise to check and see if this is accurate. It is also useful to have a linear scale drawn on your base plan as you will then be able to reduce or enlarge your plans and keep a known scale. A scale of 1 : 500 is recommended for a working plan. This scale is likely to allow most Primary school plans to be copied on to A3 or A2 sized paper.

Checking the scale of your plan. If a scale is marked on your plan (eg 1:500, 1:1250, etc.) you can check it with a tape measure and a scale ruler (available from most good stationery shops).

1. Choose a building on the plan with one straight side that you can easily measure on site. Go outside and measure the length of this side.
2. On your scale ruler find the scale which corresponds to the number scale (eg 1:500, 1:1250, etc) marked on your plan. Using this scale measure on your plan the length of the side which you measured in **1**
3. The side of the building should be approximately the same length on site and on the plan. (There may be a small margin of error as both paper and tape measures stretch). If they are very different you will need to make a scale for your plan, see Table 5
4. Use your scale ruler at the appropriate scale to draw a linear scale on your plan. Mark it off in metre intervals.

TABLE 5

Example of Linear Scale

Putting a scale on your plan - if there is no scale marked on your plan you will need to make one. You can do this with a tape measure and a ruler. A scale ruler may also be useful.

1. Choose a building on the plan with one straight side that you can easily measure on site. Go outside and measure the length of this side.
2. Measure on your plan the length of the side which you measured in **1**. Draw a line this long in the corner of your plan.
3. You know (from your measurements in **1**) the length this line represents. Mark it off in convenient intervals (1 metre is useful if you can do it). This is your linear scale. You may find this corresponds to one of the scales on a scale ruler, in which case you can put a number scale (eg 1:500, 1:1250, etc) on your base plan as well.

Step 3 – Enlarging or reducing your plan

You may choose to enlarge or reduce all or part of your plan to provide you with a working document. It can be helpful to enlarge parts of the detail leaving sufficient space around the margins for working notes and comments. Enlarging scale plans using the school's photocopier will not result in a strictly accurate scaled plan but it is close enough for most purposes.

Enlarging a plan

1 : 500 enlarged by 200% will become approximately 1 : 250

1 : 1250 enlarged by 125% will become approximately 1 : 1000

1 : 1000 enlarged by 200% will become approximately 1 : 500

Reducing a plan

1 : 500 reduced by 50% will become approximately 1 : 1000

Alternatively you can draw a visible linear scale on the area to be enlarged. See Step 2 for instructions on how to do this. When you enlarge the plan or an area of the plan the linear scale will be enlarged by the same amount.

If you want to make large copies of your plan, you will need to locate a copier, one which can cope with up to A0 paper. These can usually be found in the Planning Departments of a local authority who may provide a copying service. Otherwise they may know of a commercial graphic photocopying shop.

Step 4 – Checking the contents of a base plan

Once you have obtained a base plan you will need to update the contents. A base plan should show:

- an outline of all buildings;
- all the boundaries (indicate which you are responsible for) including formal entrances/exits to the site;
- all internal edges - for example, where playing field meets garden, garden meets footpath, where playground meets grass area;
- an indication of North/South orientation.

You may want to add:

- the main exits/entrances for the buildings;
- the location of main sections within the school (eg, hall, classrooms);
- any areas designated for car parking within the school grounds.

Step 5 – Storing and reproducing your base plan

Having obtained an accurate base plan, it is useful to keep one clean original for future reference and reproduction. You may want to make a number of copies of the base plan on which to record different aspects of your survey work. Some schools have found it easier to have a base plan on paper and then make several acetate overlays on which to record information as it is gathered.

The original base plan should be kept in a safe place, perhaps with the other documents that relate to your school premises. If there is a major change to the site (such as a building extension or the purchase of a new piece of land) the original should be amended and the date of amendment noted. As you create more detailed plans based on this base plan, each version should be clearly dated and copies kept of each version for use in the future as historical documents.

ACTIVITY 2

Adults

Producing a site services plan

Aim

To acquire essential information about the location and existence of underground and overhead services such as gas, electricity, water, telephone and sewage disposal, and to locate regular vehicular access routes. See Table 16.

Teachers' Notes

This information is essential if you intend digging into the ground or growing trees which may affect overhead cables or underground services. Causing damage to any of these services will mean inconvenience for those affected by the loss of a service. It may also result in expense for the school to cover the cost of repair bills and claims for loss of service. In the case of gas and electricity it can also be dangerous.

It is also important to know the location of fire assembly points and of major access routes which need to be kept clear for use by fire engines, ambulances, grounds maintenance vehicles and regular deliveries.

This activity involves desk-based research. Once the information has been received it is helpful to check to see if there is visible evidence on your site. Collecting this information can be done whilst other aspects of the survey are underway.

Tasks

Step 1 – Locating the information

Either :

Contact your local authority who may be able to provide details of services within their property boundaries free of charge. This may be held within one of a number of departments such as Property Services, Education, Premises etc.

or:

Contact the services directly using the local telephone directory. You may need to supply a copy of your base plan and indicate why you need the information (for example proposing to make changes to the site). There may be a charge for each service. The service organisations may provide you with a copy of their records, may mark up your own map or may send someone to your site to track and mark their pipes and cables. It is important to know the depth as well as the location of underground services.

Step 2 – Identifying major vehicle access routes and fire assembly points

Observe and identify the access routes used by the following: emergency vehicles, grounds maintenance vehicles, refuse collecting vehicles, meals and other regular deliveries.

Consult your Fire Guidelines and locate the Fire Assembly Points.

Step 3 – Transferring service and access route detail onto your own plans

Service details, access routes and fire assembly points can be shown on an acetate or tracing paper overlay which can be used with the base plan. Services will recommend that an area on either side of their installation is kept accessible in case they need to carry out repairs and this needs to be recorded on or at the edge of the plan.

ACTIVITY 3

Adults

Identifying legal and maintenance issues relating to your site

Aim

To know all the legal, maintenance and policy information relevant to your grounds.

Teachers Notes

This activity involves desk-based research which is often carried out by an adult, although pupils can help with some of it. It can be done whilst other aspects of the survey are underway. This information may change and so may need to be updated in the future.

Tasks

Step 1 – Complete the following checklist

The notes in italics indicate possible sources of information and a sample checklist for you to complete is provided on page 15.

Has ownership of all aspects of the grounds been clarified, especially in Church schools? *Local authority or school property deeds. Boundary ownership should be marked onto the base plan.*

Are there any Rights of Way on your land or adjacent to your land? *Local planning authority.*

Are there any plans to sell your land? *Local authority or governing body.*

Are there any proposals to develop your school or local community? *Local planning authority, community groups, Parish Council.*

Are there any Tree Preservation Orders, Building Conservation Orders etc.? *Local planning authority.*

Are any current developments funded by schemes like the Woodland Grant Schemes? *In-school records - renegotiation of the grant may be required.*

How do your neighbours use their land? *Look over the fence - are they very keen gardeners?*

Are your grounds currently maintained under one or more contracts? If so, who are the contractors? *Check contract documents in school or ask your Client Services Unit.*

Who is your contact at Client/Contract Services?

Who, within school, is responsible for managing grounds maintenance?

Where are the contract documents kept in school?

Does your local authority require you to obtain permission for any site developments? *(This may be more than one department.)*

Which school policy documents include reference to the grounds? *Behaviour policy, Play policy, School Development Plan, Curriculum plans etc.*

Step 2 – Store this information

Keep this information in an accessible place along with your base plan.

TABLE 3

Legal and maintenance issues affecting our school grounds

Has ownership of all aspects of the grounds been clarified, especially in Church schools?

Are there any Rights of Way on your land or adjacent to your land?

Are there any plans to sell your land?

Are there any proposals to develop your school or local community?

Are there any Tree Preservation Orders, Building Conservation Orders, etc.?

Are any current developments funded by schemes like the Woodland Grant Scheme?

How do your neighbours use their land?

Are your grounds currently maintained under one or more contracts? If so, who are the contractors?

Who is your contact at Client/Contract Services?

Who, within school, is responsible for managing grounds maintenance?

Where are the contract documents kept in school?

Does your local authority require you to obtain permission for any site developments?

Which school policy documents include reference to the grounds?

Other issues

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SURVEY OF FEATURES IN YOUR SCHOOL GROUNDS

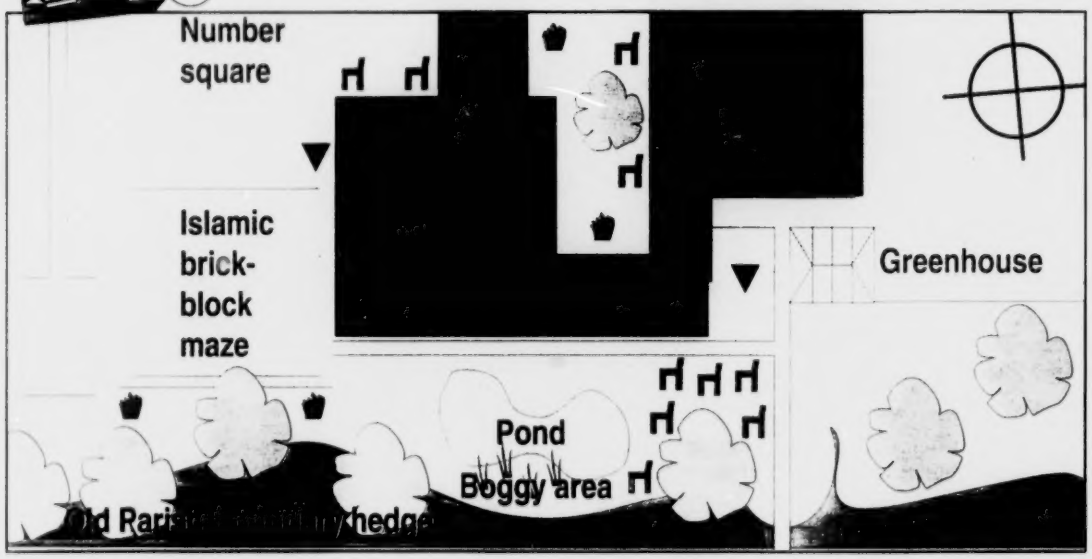
Introduction to Activities 4 - 5

It is important to know what exists on your school site in order to know how to manage it most effectively as it is or to consider what impact any changes may have. It is not uncommon to hear of situations where the creation of a new feature has resulted in the destruction of an existing, even more valuable, feature. For example the removal of an old dry stone wall, already home to many varieties of plant and animal life, to make way for a mixed species hedge. This will result in the loss of a locally distinctive style of boundary and, in the short and medium term, a loss of species and habitat diversity.

Having completed Activities 4 and 5 you will be able to:

- produce a detailed site plan showing all the built and natural features;
- further raise awareness about your grounds, what they contain and their potential as a resources for formal and informal learning.

TABLE 7 **Extract from a school site plan showing features**



Additional activities

Having completed this section you may like to consider the following additional activities which, although not vital at this stage of site development, could provide you with further valuable information about your grounds:

1. Identify and record the species, age and condition of all the trees on site. (Your local authority tree officer or local tree warden may be able to help)
2. Identify and record the garden species present on site and their condition. (Your local County Gardens Trust may be able to help.)
3. Complete a condition survey to evaluate your current grounds maintenance practices (*A Guide to the Management and Maintenance of School Grounds* may help - see Useful Resources.)
4. Look at the species and structures on site and consider if they are locally distinctive to your village, borough, district, county or region (Your local Wildlife or Civic Trusts may be able to help).
5. Carry out a photographic survey.
6. If you decide to develop your grounds you may need to return to the areas to be developed and collect more detailed information about specific locations of features, soil types etc.

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ACTIVITY 4

Pupils

Collecting data about site features

Aim

To record all the features which exist in your school grounds and locate them on a plan of the school site. See Table 17.

Teachers Notes

Each school will approach a site survey in a different way. Schools have completed a whole site survey in one day by suspending the timetable and involving the whole school, for example, on School Grounds Day. Other schools have set aside a whole week or time each week to carry out survey work and build up their information over a half term or longer. Whichever method is chosen the key factors are:

- adequate preparation - if you plan to complete the survey in a day, it is vital that base plans have been prepared in advance and have been copied ready for use;
- consistency in approach - so that data is compatible, whoever has collected it;
- accuracy in recording - the numbers present of each feature, the area occupied if this is more appropriate (eg, an area of woodland or a shrub bed) and the location of the feature all need careful noting;
- flexibility - you need to take advantage of any opportunities the survey creates to discuss feelings and suggestions about the site;
- enjoyment - surveys can be fun, especially when those involved know that the purpose of the activity is to ensure their own needs and those of everyone else will be addressed.

Task

Step 1 – Survey preparation

The following equipment will be required:

- copies of the base plan with the scale marked;
- pencils and clip boards;
- measuring tapes (30m);
- camera - if you intend doing a photographic survey at the same time;
- scale rulers for transferring information onto the base plan.

Step 2 – Dividing up your site into manageable zones

For most Primary school pupils it is helpful to restrict the area being surveyed at any one time. You may choose to split the site into zones, with easily recognised boundaries. These may be obvious existing zones such as the Dell or the Playground, or they may be chosen for their ease of identification on the site plan, for example, the front of the school, the side of the school, the playing field or the nature area. Alternatively you may choose to split up the survey by features - for example trees, play facilities or gardens.

Whether using zones or features it may be helpful to mark out on site the areas of the grounds being surveyed to help pupils locate themselves and features onto the plan they are using.

Step 3 – Collecting data

Organise your pupils into groups or pairs to collect the survey information. Two possible methods of organisation are:

1. **Area Teams :**

   Split pupils up into teams and allocate each team a defined area (like the west playground) and ask them to survey and record everything that is out there before moving onto the next area.

2. **Specialist Teams :**

   Split pupils up into teams and allocate each team a specific type of feature they are to look for, eg:

   Tree Officers - to locate and identify all individual trees on site.

   Engineers - to record the materials and location of surfaces, edges, walls, and gates.

   Seating Officers - to record the location, materials and condition of all seats.

   Health Officers - to record the location of branches hanging over paths, broken paving, littering etc.

   Gardeners - to record the approximate size and location of all cultivated areas and give an indication of what they contain (eg roses, shrubs, herbs).

   Play Officers - to record the location and type of playground markings and equipment, etc.

   Conservation Officers - to record the location of ponds, log-piles, orchards, nutteries, hedges, meadows etc.

Provide each team with a working copy of the relevant part of the base plan on which to record these feature. Notes about condition and materials can either go on the edges of the working plan or on a separate sheet.

Hints

- Marking out areas in your grounds - this can be physically achieved using ropes or canes to indicate the boundaries of the area being surveyed.
- Using outside help - it may be useful to organise additional supervision for groups when they are working outside. It is important that your choice reflects your particular needs and that the person chosen is able to involve pupils fully.
- Parents, governors and school board members are obvious choices but, in addition, the following may be able to help:

  Local tree warden or local authority Tree Officer - help with tree surveys.

  British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) / Scottish Conservation Projects (SCP) or Wildlife Trusts / Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT) - help with habitat and species surveys.

  Local gardening club or Gardens Trust members - help with garden species survey.

- Photographic surveys - it can be useful to take photographs of the whole site and this can be combined with collecting data on site. It is particularly useful to take photographs from fixed points so that subsequent photographs can be taken from the same spot to show seasonal or physical changes in the grounds. Have a base plan available so that you can mark your position and the direction of the photograph. Such photographs can provide you with a rich resource, especially since "before" and "after" photographs are particularly valuable for fundraising approaches and displays.

ACTIVITY 5

Adults or Pupils

Recording and sharing what has been found

Aim

To amalgamate all the data collected onto one clear and accurate plan and present the findings to the whole school. See Table 17.

Teachers Notes

Once each group has completed their survey, the data needs to be transferred from individual copies onto one plan. This should result in either one detailed plan or it may consist of a base plan overlaid with clear plastic or acetate sheets or sheets of tracing paper, each showing details of the locations of certain types of feature or the details of each area of the site that has been surveyed. This activity can be completed by pupils or adults with an emphasis on the need for accuracy when working on the scaled base plan.

Task

Step 1 – Amalgamate your information

Transfer data from each team's survey sheets. Schools often choose to design their own symbols to represent the features they have on their site. As with collecting data, it is important that the symbols are used consistently on the final detailed site plan.

Step 2 – Share your work

Through assembly or foyer displays, share the findings throughout the school. Your findings can be displayed in large scrap books, using collages or a photo-montage, pie charts and bar graphs.

SURVEY OF USE OF THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

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Introduction to Activities 6 - 9

There have been incidents where a school has developed an area of the site and in the process accidentally destroyed a feature that was of particular value to one sector of the school community - for example a new pond for use during lessons may mean the loss of the area used by the local Brownie Pack for practising tent-pitching. It is, therefore, important to know how your grounds are used throughout the year. It is important to ensure that the picture obtained is a full one, covering all sectors of the school community, and that this information is shared with the whole school.

It is important to remember that the very act of surveying use can highlight areas that are currently under-used and stimulate teachers and other staff to consider new uses that they might make of the site. As with other survey activities, it is important that, while encouraging personal enthusiasms, everyone is given the opportunity to see the complete picture before making drastic changes to their activities or to the features on your site.

By completing these activities you will:

- identify all the curricular and community uses that your school grounds currently support;
- produce an annotated map or model to show where the following take place:

  Formal curriculum use

  Which subjects are taught at which locations within the school grounds, when during the year and by which teachers.

  Informal curriculum use

  Which areas are in and out of bounds for play, within those areas including seasonal changes. Which parts are used for what sort of activity and by pupils from which classes.

  Extra-curricular use

  Whether there are after-school or lunchtime clubs using the grounds, which areas are used, when and what for.

  Community use

  Which parts of your site are used formally or informally by the community, for example the local football team, Scouts, Adult Education evening classes or children from the village at weekends and evenings. When they use it. Whether there are one-off events using the grounds, such as car boot sales or a Summer fete.

Additional activities

Having completed this section you may like to consider the following additional activities which, although not vital at this stage of site development, could provide you with further valuable information about your grounds:

1. Identify if and where there are areas of persistent abuse for example littering, graffiti, arson, dog fouling or evidence of drug or alcohol abuse. This knowledge may help you plan future developments or campaigns.
2. Identify the location of any other outdoor resources which do or could provide for outdoor experiences locally such as nature reserves, country parks, public parks or woodlands, sports fields or centres. This information may help you identify potentially income generating activities through future site development.

ACTIVITY 6

Adults

Surveying formal curriculum use

Aim

To know and record:

- which areas are used for teaching;
- what subjects are taught in these areas;
- when areas are used for teaching (daily, weekly, termly, annually). See Table 18.

Teachers Notes

This activity can be done as part of a normal staff meeting or during curriculum planning meetings. Alternatively pupils can interview all the teachers in the school and this data can be incorporated.

Tasks

Step 1 – Identifying teaching areas

Use a copy of the base plan for reference and ask staff members to identify the areas of the grounds they use for teaching. Give every area on the base plan a letter or number code.

Step 2 – Collect further information about subject use

Information can be written onto a prepared sheet which lists all the areas of the site, or can be recorded by annotating the map itself, depending on the level of site use as a teaching resource and the number of teachers. It might be possible to create a spreadsheet. For each location used teachers should note:

Subject	what they teach in the area, listing all subjects
Timing	when they use it - time of year or which term(s)
How frequently	how often do they use it - daily, weekly, annually.

Alternatively a copy of the base plan can be given to each teacher with the request that they provide this information.

Step 3 – Amalgamate your information

Use one base plan or overlay to record each area used, showing the subjects, time of year and frequency of use. You may wish to use a key.

Hints

If this activity takes place during a curriculum planning session, teachers may find they want to note what additional use they might make of the grounds in the future.

TABLE 8

Survey of formal curriculum use

Location	Used by	Subject taught	Frequency of use

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ACTIVITY 7

Pupils with Adults

Surveying informal curriculum use

Aim

To know what children do at breaktimes and lunchtime and to know which features or areas are used for play. See Table 19.

Teachers Notes

The term "informal curriculum" is now widely used to describe both the times of the day when children are in schools but not being taught, play and break times, and what they do during those times. Whilst organisational factors will vary, the amount of time allocated to the informal curriculum can account for between a third and a quarter of each day in Primary schools. This, therefore, represents a significant part of time spent at school by children. In addition, because the informal curriculum generally takes place outside, weather permitting, schools grounds are likely to be used most for this purpose.

The aim of this part of the survey is to find out what constitutes the informal curriculum in your school, to find out what children do at play and breaktimes, how the grounds are used and to record and share that knowledge. This information provides an insight into one aspect of children's experience of school and this will help to inform changes you may make later.

There are several ways of obtaining this information. Some ideas are given below. Whichever methods you choose, experience suggests that various factors need to be taken into consideration in the planning and management of this part of the survey:

- Play behaviour patterns vary during short playtimes and longer lunch breaks. A more complete picture will be obtained by including both periods in your investigations.
- Play behaviour is influenced by the way periods are supervised. Research suggests that children may behave differently depending on whether they are being supervised by teaching or non-teaching staff. In is therefore important to gather opinions about the informal curriculum from both teaching staff and lunchtime supervisors.
- Play behaviour is influenced by rules. This is particularly relevant where parts of the grounds are sometimes put out-of-bounds due to climatic conditions or where grounds are zoned and parts are set aside for different age groups. It is important that these factors are taken into account when planning and undertaking the survey.
- If possible, every pupil should have an opportunity to take part, not only to ensure the completeness of the exercise but also because they will feel this is an important exercise and will not want to be excluded. If any child shows serious reticence they clearly should not be coerced, but this may signal a degree of unhappiness about playtime and needs further investigation.
- The location in which the survey takes place may have a bearing on the outcome. If possible, try to conduct at least some element in the grounds. Research suggests that the quality of the information obtained from children is enhanced when they are actually in the place they are thinking about. However it is likely to be easier for all concerned if certain exercises are not undertaken during play or breaktime.

Tasks

You may wish to undertake some or all of the following methods. Alternatively you may devise your own version or create completely new techniques. Many schools have found it valuable to involve pupils in designing their own questionnaires as this, in itself, can be an interesting and useful exercise. We have, however, provided a sample questionnaire on page 27 for use or adaptation.

Method 1 Questionnaire for completion by pupils

See attached sample questionnaire on page 27. Consideration needs to be given to whether or not children are asked to put their names on the returned questionnaires.

Method 2 Questionnaire for completion by staff

It is important to include staff and also useful to compare what they think children do with what the children say. If pupils are not involved in this part it may be possible to ask more searching questions and staff may feel more able to give more specific and detailed responses.

Method 3 Interviews by pupils of pupils using a questionnaire format.

This can be a way of involving the youngest children, with the older ones interviewing them in groups. Unless the interviews are tape recorded it is possible that information may get lost - deliberately of otherwise! Listening to the tapes is interesting and will provide some good quotes. Transcribing them can take a great deal of time.

Method 4 Interviews of staff by pupils

The pupils will enjoy this, although some staff may find it intimidating.

Method 5 Activity maps.

Pupils can devise codes for particular activities and, using a map of the site, identify the location where different activities take place. This can be a group or an individual activity and can also be a useful way of recording and sharing the information collected from questionnaires and interviews.

Method 6 Photographic and video records

This is very interesting but possibly expensive way of recording the environment and the way it, and elements within it, are used. If shots are taken from a number of fixed points at set times of the day throughout the year, this will provide a valuable record with lots of potential applications.

Method 7 Tracking maps.

Children can conduct observational exercises by tracking other children during play or breaktimes, recording their movements on a map of the site. This needs to be a one-on-one exercise and undertaken over short periods of time.

TABLE 2

What we do at breaktimes

Name: (if appropriate) **Date:** **Time of day:**

What do you do at play time?

What do you like doing best?

What do you play with?

Who do you play with?

Where do you play?

Where are you not allowed to play?

What do you like about play/breaktime?

What don't you like about play/breaktime?

List all the things you did at playtime today.

List all the things you did at lunchtime today.

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ACTIVITY 8

Adults and Pupils

Surveying extra-curricular and community use

Aim

To know which areas of the school grounds are used for extra-curricular activities by groups such as the gardening club, the conservation club, sports teams etc.

To identify which areas of the school grounds are let for use by community and other groups. See Table 19.

Teachers Notes

This activity can be done by pupils. However, if you decide to include anti-social uses such as vandalism, drug abuse etc, this aspect may be best dealt with by adults.

Tasks

Step 1 – Identifying school clubs and community groups that use the school

Brainstorm within the class which clubs are run after school and which community groups use the school. Check with the school Secretary to make sure you have listed them all.

Step 2 – Obtaining contacts for all the clubs and groups

Ask the school Secretary, the caretaker/janitor or the headteacher for a list of the contact names and addresses of all clubs and groups which use the school grounds in some way (even if only for car parking).

Step 3 – Designing and sending a questionnaire

Design and produce a simple questionnaire and send to all the school clubs and community groups asking them:

- which areas of the school they use;
- what activities take place there;
- what time of the day (or week, or term) they take place.

There will be a need for pupils to include a letter explaining the reasons for collecting this information, especially for the community groups.

Step 4 – Identifying events in the school grounds

Brainstorm with pupils and staff to produce a list of any regular events that take place in the school grounds such as Sports Day, the school fete, the annual car boot sale or the County schools football final.

ACTIVITY 9

Adults and Pupils

Recording and sharing your findings

Aim

To analyse how much use you are making of your site and share this with the school community.

Teachers Notes

This activity can be completed by pupils or adults.

Tasks

Step 1 – Preparing a calendar of events

When the questionnaires have been returned and using the information from your brainstorming session, prepare weekly and annual school grounds calendars showing which areas are used, by which groups, and for what activities. Be sure the areas mentioned are marked on a base plan which is displayed with the calendar. Example calendars are provided on pages 30 and 31.

Step 2 – Annotate your plan or model

Gather together all the use surveys (formal, informal, extra-curricular and community) and prepare colour coded flags to represent all of the activities that take place in your grounds. Stick on an enlarged base plan (or model) to record the type of use, the frequency and the time of year.

Step 3 – Identify the areas of features which are:

- used for teaching;
- used at breaktime;
- used after school hours;
- used most often;
- used least or not at all.

TABLE 10

School Calendar - weekly use by community groups

	Area used	Activity	Group
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

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TABLE 11

School Calendar - annual school and community events

	Area used	Event	Date
January			
February			
March			
April			
May			
June			
July			
August			
September			
October			
November			
December			

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CANVASSING OPINIONS ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL GROUNDS

Introduction to Activities 10 - 12

School grounds development projects are most successful when the whole school community engages in the project. These activities are designed to ensure that everyone feels that their opinions and interests are taken into account.

Completing these activities will enable you to:

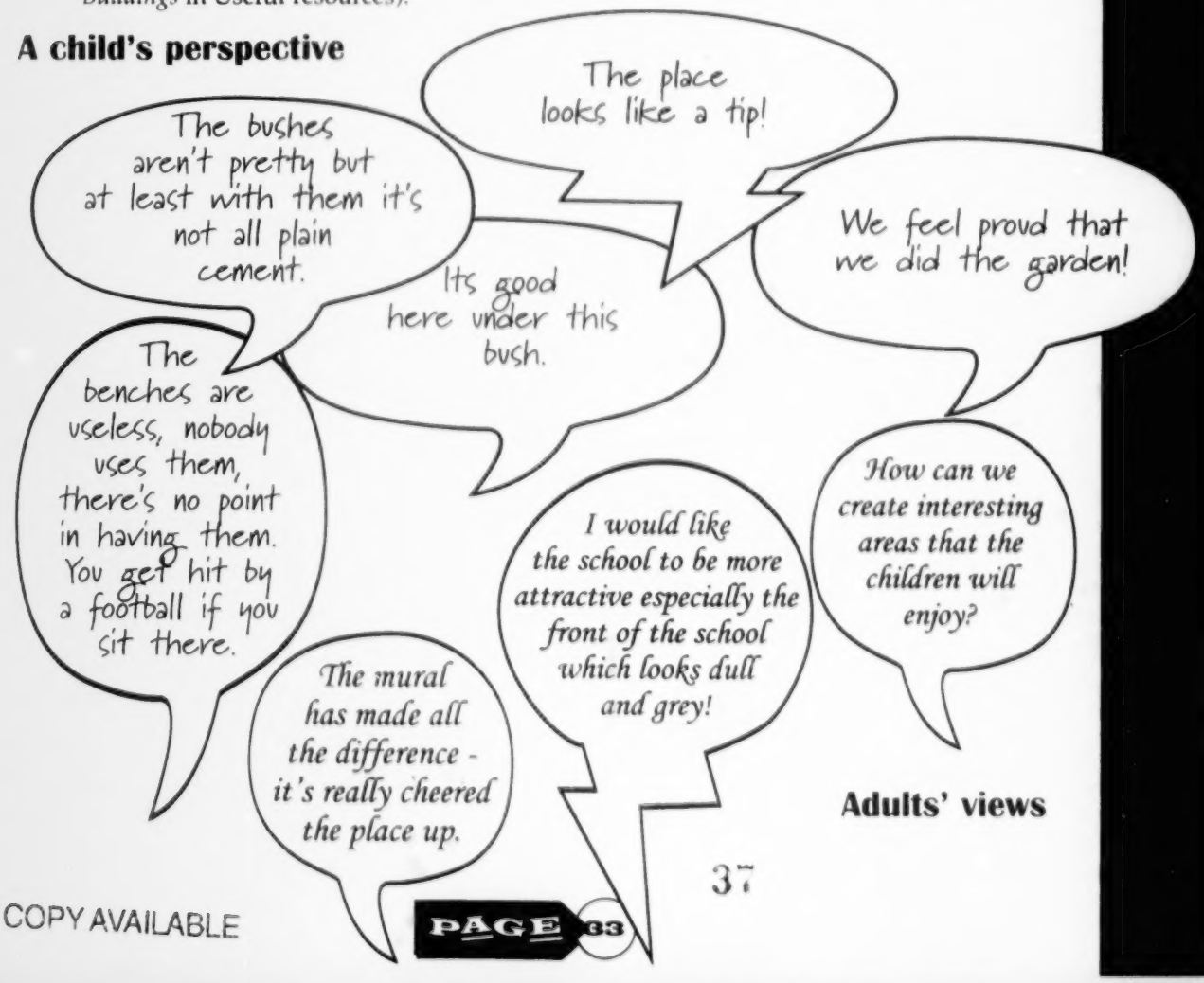
- provide an opportunity for everyone to air their views;
- raise awareness about your school grounds;
- identify some of the areas, features or activities which are particularly liked/disliked, valued or feared by pupils, staff, parents, governors and school board members;
- clarify similarities and differences in the views of all those within the school community.

Additional activities

After you have completed this section you may like to consider the following additional activities which, although not vital at this stage of site development, could provide you with further valuable information about your grounds:

1. View your school site from outside and consider what image it presents to neighbours, passers-by, visitors and the community as a whole.
2. Consider the entrances and exits to your site (See *Esso Schoolwatch - School Grounds and Buildings* in Useful resources).

A child's perspective


The place looks like a tip!
The bushes aren't pretty but at least with them it's not all plain cement.
We feel proud that we did the garden!
Its good here under this bush.
The benches are useless, nobody uses them, there's no point in having them. You get hit by a football if you sit there.
How can we create interesting areas that the children will enjoy?
I would like the school to be more attractive especially the front of the school which looks dull and grey!
The mural has made all the difference - it's really cheered the place up.

Adults' views

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ACTIVITY 10

Pupils with Adults

Getting the views of your pupils

Aim

To find out what your pupils feel about their school grounds.

Teachers Notes

This activity will provide you with an understanding of the messages that pupils receive from the way the school site is designed, managed and used. These constitute the hidden curriculum of your school site. It will also provide you with information about which features, areas and activities are valued by the pupils at present. To avoid the distraction of playtime, this activity is best undertaken during lessons. If possible, it needs to be repeated at different times of the year.

This activity can be an ideal way of involving governors, school board members and parents in the work of the school, as it can involve adults and pupils working together to obtain information. However, it is important that the information gathered is shared effectively within the whole school or the value of the activity will be greatly reduced.

Tasks

Many schools have found it valuable to involve pupils in designing their own questionnaires as this, in itself, can be an interesting and useful exercise. A sample questionnaire for you to adapt, is provided on page 36. You may wish to use some or all of the following methods.

Step 1 – Choosing a method

Method 1

Questionnaire for completion by pupils - see page 36. Whole class surveys can be achieved by using questionnaires although it is most useful for the activity to take place outdoors and to include all areas of the site. Consideration needs to be given to whether or not children are asked to put their names on the returned questionnaires.

Method 2

Interviews of pupils by adults using a questionnaire format. This can be a way of involving governors, school board members or parents in the survey. Ideally interviews should take place in the areas being discussed. It may be useful to tape record the interviews and then transcribe them as this will allow discussion to flow freely. Transcribing them can take a great deal of time. Further hints concerning interviewing are given below.

Step 2 – Summarising pupils views

After completing the activity you will need to collate the information you have recorded, identifying common strands and record these on a base plan or an acetate or tracing paper overlay. Additional comments which you feel to be important can be recorded in the margins of the plan or on a separate sheet. Alternatively you can use flags with pins to stick onto a model of your site or use bar graphs to indicate most and least favoured areas.

Hints

Preparing interviewers

Whether adults or pupils take the part of interviewers, they will need to understand that they have a difficult role, involving gentle questioning and open-minded listening. It is very easy to get biased results if the questions are weighted.

For example, the following questions are likely to lead to quite different responses, with the first leading to limited discussion and the second being more open ended and productive.

Example 1

"We are really concerned about the number of accidents that happen at playtime. Tell us how you feel about the playground?"

Example 2

"We are not in the playground as often as you are and so we want to hear how you feel about the playground and what you enjoy or dislike about it?"

Interviewers will need to restrain themselves from imposing their thoughts on the discussions and refrain from the inevitable desire to begin to discuss possible solutions to any problems that are brought to light. However, if pupils put forward possible solutions, these should be noted for future reference during the process of school grounds development.

Choosing a route

This activity needs to include the whole site. Schools will want to adopt the method with which they are most comfortable, for example:

Starting at the gate

Some schools have found that it is helpful to start in busy areas likely to elicit comment (for example the entrance where children are dropped off and picked up by parents) and then to move on towards those less likely to elicit comment. By following this method, pupils will have got over any nervousness about the activity and be happier about confiding their views.

The guided tour

You can simply start from one point and then ask pupils to take you on a complete site tour. The order in which they take you may in itself be significant, with popular or known difficult areas being first (or last) and secret or special places coming only when they are confident that you will take them seriously (or they are happy with the activity).

TABLE 12

Getting the views of pupils

Location in school grounds: _____

Group being consulted:
(eg class, pupils' names)

What do you like about the school grounds?

How does it make you feel being out here?

Are there any things which are especially good/bad about the grounds?

Which bits of the grounds are nice the way they are?

Do you have a favourite place? Why is it special?

Are there things or places you do not like? Why?

Do you remember having a lesson in the school grounds?

What did you learn or do?

Which bits of the grounds do you think are especially important? Why?

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ACTIVITY 11

Adults

Getting the views of school staff

Aim

To find out what your school staff feel about the grounds. See Table 20.

Teachers Notes

It is important that all members of staff have an opportunity to express their opinions about the school grounds. Therefore, this activity needs to be organised so that it involves teaching staff, mid-day supervisors, the janitor or caretaker and classroom assistants.

The point of this activity is to find out what people think about the grounds as they are at present. Whilst ideas and suggestions for changes may be made, at this stage they should be recorded rather than acted upon.

When planning this activity it is worth considering whether you will arrange for one meeting which will be attended by everybody, or a series of meetings for each of the groups involved.

Tasks

Step 1 – Brainstorming the issues

Using a copy of the base plan for reference, ask staff to use words to describe:

- what comes to mind when they think of the school grounds;
- what are they issues they associate with the school grounds;
- which aspects of the grounds do they think are an asset.

These should all be written down on a large sheet of paper and, if appropriate, the location should be noted.

Step 2 – Summarising staff views

Provide each person with three coloured dots and ask them to put the dots beside the things that they think are particularly important. This will give you an indication about the issues which are most important for most people and may also highlight any difference between teaching and non-teaching staff. This list can be kept for future reference during the process of school grounds development.

TABLE 13

School staff views (example)

Issue	Where
Litter	Playing fields by gate
Fighting	Playground by toilets Muddy areas near the steps
Nowhere for people to sit	
Smelly bins	
Wasps coming in the window	Flower bed window, Room 6
Dangerous when parents are dropping off children by car	Side gate

Assets

Lovely trees

Good views from my classroom

Protective neighbours

Its really good the way the parents come in and help with the gardening club

Lots of shady areas to sit outside in summer

That nice sheltered bit where you can get away from the wind.

The mounds are good - but they get muddy on top.

Having the bird table has been great.

Being able to step out of the classroom into the courtyard for lessons.

TABLE 14

School staff views

Issue	Where

Assets

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ACTIVITY 12

Adults and Pupils

Getting the views of your parents, governors or school board members

Aims

To find out what parents, governors and school board members feel about the school grounds. See Table 20.

Teachers Notes

This activity can be organised and run by pupils or by adults. Pupils and adults will need to discuss the issues relating to producing a questionnaire (how long should it be, what level of language should be used, how will they be sent out and returned etc.) The purpose of the activity will also need to be explained to parents, governors and school board members as part of the questionnaire, via the school newsletter or at a parents meeting.

Tasks

Step 1 – Produce a questionnaire

Pupils can prepare a questionnaire and make copies to send out to for completion by parents, governors and school board members. A sample questionnaire is included and could be given out at a parents or governors or school board members meeting or with the school newsletter.

Step 2 – Summarising governors, school board members and parents' views

Once the questionnaires have been completed, the results need to be transferred to the base plan or to an acetate overlay. This will include:

- which areas or features are most popular;
- which areas or features are least popular;
- which areas or features cause problems (and a brief note to explain what the problem is);
- which areas they think pupils like.

Questionnaire seeking your views about the school grounds

We are currently looking at the school grounds and would like to know your views. We would be grateful if you would complete the following questionnaire and return it to school.

1. What do you think of our school grounds?

2. Are there any parts which you like and why?

3. Are there any parts which you dislike and why?

4. What do you think about the way the school grounds are used?

5. Which parts of our school grounds do think your children particularly like and why?

6. Which parts of our school grounds do you think your children dislike and why?

7. Is there anything about our site that causes you particular problems?

8. Any other comments?

Please return to.....
Headteacher

PHOTOCOPIABLE MASTER

ANALYSING AND USING YOUR SURVEY INFORMATION

Introduction

The final stage of your survey is to collate and review all the information you have gathered and then draw out the key **outcomes** from each aspect of the survey. Some examples and suggestions for **action** are given below. Identifying your school's needs is the next stage in the process of developing your school grounds and it requires the same level of thoroughness as the survey. However, during survey analysis some indicators of need will become obvious and these will for the basis for your work as you move on to the next stage.

Activity 3

Clarification of site ownership and responsibilities.

Action points Are there areas of land or responsibilities you were unaware of before? Is any action required? For example, do you need to make any changes to your grounds maintenance contract?

Identification of local or school-based developments.

Action points Can you find out what has been agreed so far, what is planned and where and when it may happen? If there are plans to expand your school, do you know or can you envisage where any new buildings may be placed?

Identification of individuals and groups in your local authority and your local area who a service relevant to school grounds and their maintenance.

Action points How can you make best use of the range of services on offer? Do you want to seek advice from any of them at this stage?

Activity 4

Knowledge of what your grounds contain.

Action points Are there any features which, now that they are known about, could be maintained or used more effectively?

Knowledge of the condition of the features in your grounds

Action points Are there any which are broken or damaged and require immediate attention? Does your grounds maintenance contract provide the level and quality of service you want and can afford?

Activity 5

Production of a detailed site plan or model showing all the built and natural features.

Action points Are there any areas of your school grounds which are particularly well developed? Or under-developed?

Activity 6

Information about the extent to which the grounds are used for lessons.

Action points Can you identify what might improve the quality or increase the variety of formal curriculum use, for example, training in outdoor teaching skills, changes to specific features etc? If there is no formal use of the grounds, what are the reasons?

Activities 7 & 8

Knowledge about the type and location of activities that take place at play and breaktime.

Action points Are any areas especially popular at play and breaktimes? Is there a difference in the type and location of play between play and lunchtime breaks?

Activity 8

A list of which community groups use your school grounds.

Action points Are you satisfied that they are making a positive (financial and social) contribution to school life?

Activities 6 - 9

An overview of the current level of use for your school grounds.

Action points Are there any aspects which are:

- under-used? What are the reasons (location, condition, content etc)? Do they have potential for future development for school use or for sale?
- over-used? Is this causing excessive wear and tear or other problems? Can this be addressed through a higher level of maintenance or a change in the type or timing of use?
- abused? Does it pose a health and safety risk?

Activities 10, 11 & 12

A summary about how pupils and staff feel about what happens in the grounds.

Action points Can you identify other indicators of the quality of that experience? For example by looking at the Accidents or Incidents Book, are there any areas or games that consistently cause problems?

An overview of opinions about your site.

Action points Can you summarise which uses and/or features are:

- most popular with pupils and why;
- most popular with staff and why;
- most popular with parents and why;
- least popular with pupils and why;
- least popular with staff and why;
- least popular with parents and why;
- cause problems (and a brief note to explain what the problems and who is affected);
- are valued within the school.

More general follow-up activities

These include:

- ✔ Are there any conclusions that you can draw from any differences in opinions between each of the groups? You can refer back to these lists when you begin to propose changes that could be made to the grounds.

- ✔ Overall, how do your findings relate to your Site Risk Assessment, if this has been done?

- ✔ Does any aspect of the grounds, or the way they are maintained, require immediate attention because of the nature or extent of problem they are causing?

- ✔ Use the detailed site plan(s) and/or an annotated model to share and celebrate what you have discovered as a result of completing a survey of your grounds. This can be done through a school display, an article in the school newsletter or at a parents, governors or school board meetings. You should ensure that all the groups within your school community have an opportunity to see and hear what you have found.

Moving to the next stage

When you have analysed your survey you have moved towards the next stage of your school grounds project - taking a closer look at the needs of every group within the school and how these could be met by developing your school grounds. During this stage you could look at:

- **what pupils want to be able to do outside;**
- **what teachers want to be able to teach outside;**
- **what other staff members and the wider school community want the grounds to provide for them;**
- **what image you want your grounds to convey.**

These stages are dealt with in more detail in the *LTL School Grounds Development Toolkit*.

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CURRICULUM LINKS IN SURVEYING YOUR SCHOOL GROUNDS

Links with the National Curriculum

The activities suggested in this survey pack can provide opportunities for the following aspects of the National Curriculum.

In this chart, colour is used to denote Key stage, for example: 1a = Key stage 1; 1b = Key stage 2

Mathematics	Using and applying mathematics Site 1a, 1c, 3a Shape, space and measures 1c, 4a 1e, 4a, 4b Handling data no KS 1 1b, 2b	Activities 1, 4, 5
English	Speaking and listening 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a, 2b, 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a, 2b Writing 1a, 1b, 1c, 2b, 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a, 2b	Activities 4 - 12
Science	Life processes and living things 4a, 4b, 5a, 4a, 5a Materials and their properties 1c, 1d, 1a	Activity 4
Design and Technology	Making skills 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d 4a, 4b	Activities 5, 9
Information Technology	Communication and handling information 2a, 2b, 2c, 2a, 2b	Activities 5, 9, 12
Geography	Geographical skills 3a, 3b, 3d, 3b, 3c Places 4, 5 Thematic study 6a 10a, 10b	Activities 4, 5 Activity 10
Art	2a, 2b, 2c, 7a, 7b 2a, 2b, 2c, 7a, 7b	Activities 5, 9, 12

Links with the 5 -14 Curriculum for Scotland

The activities suggested in this survey pack can provide opportunities for the following aspects of the 5-14 Curriculum.

Environmental Studies

Science	Understanding living things and the processes of life	*Variety and characteristic features*	Activity 4
	Understanding earth and space	*On planet earth*	Activity 4
		Materials from earth	Activity 4
Social Subjects	Understanding people and place	*Aspects of the physical and built environment*	Activities 4, 5
		Ways in which places have affected people and people have used and affected places	Activities 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
		Making and using maps	Activities 1, 4
	Understanding people in the past	*Developing an understanding of time and historical sequence*	Activities 9
	Understanding people in society	*Social groupings, social needs and how they are met*	Activities 10, 11, 12
Information Technology	Understanding and using information technology	*Techniques for using computer software to enter and process text and other information*	Activities 4, 5, 7, 8

Mathematics

	Information handling	*Collecting, organising, displaying and interpreting information*	Activities 4, 5, 9
	Number money and measurement	*Notation, ordering, costing, measuring and problem-solving*	Activities 1, 4, 5

Expressive Arts

Art and design:	Using materials, techniques, skills and media	*Investigating visually and recording when drawing, painting, modelling and taking photographs*	Activities 5, 9, 12
	Expressing feeling, ideas, thoughts and solutions	*Personal expression and communication of pupils' real and imagined experiences*	Activities 10, 12

English Language

	Listening/watching	*Listening and understanding*	Activities 1, 4, 7
	Talking	*Talking to convey information in a variety of contexts*	Activities 5, 7, 9, 10, 12
	Reading	*Reading to find and handle information*	Activities 7, 10
	Writing	*Functional and personal writing*	Activities 8, 12

EXAMPLE SITE PLAN

TABLE 16 Example of school site base plan

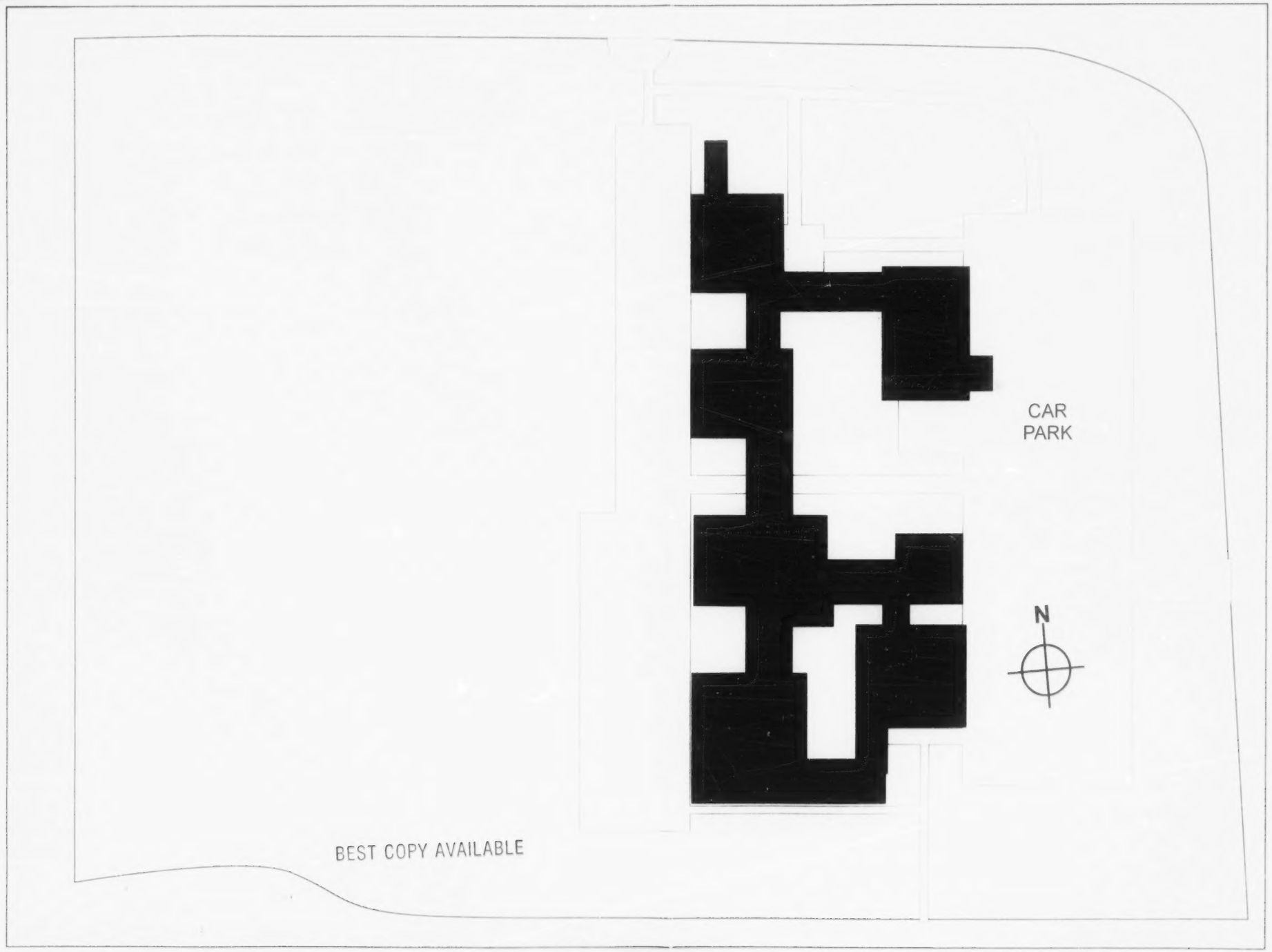

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TABLE 17 **Overlay of school site plan showing services**

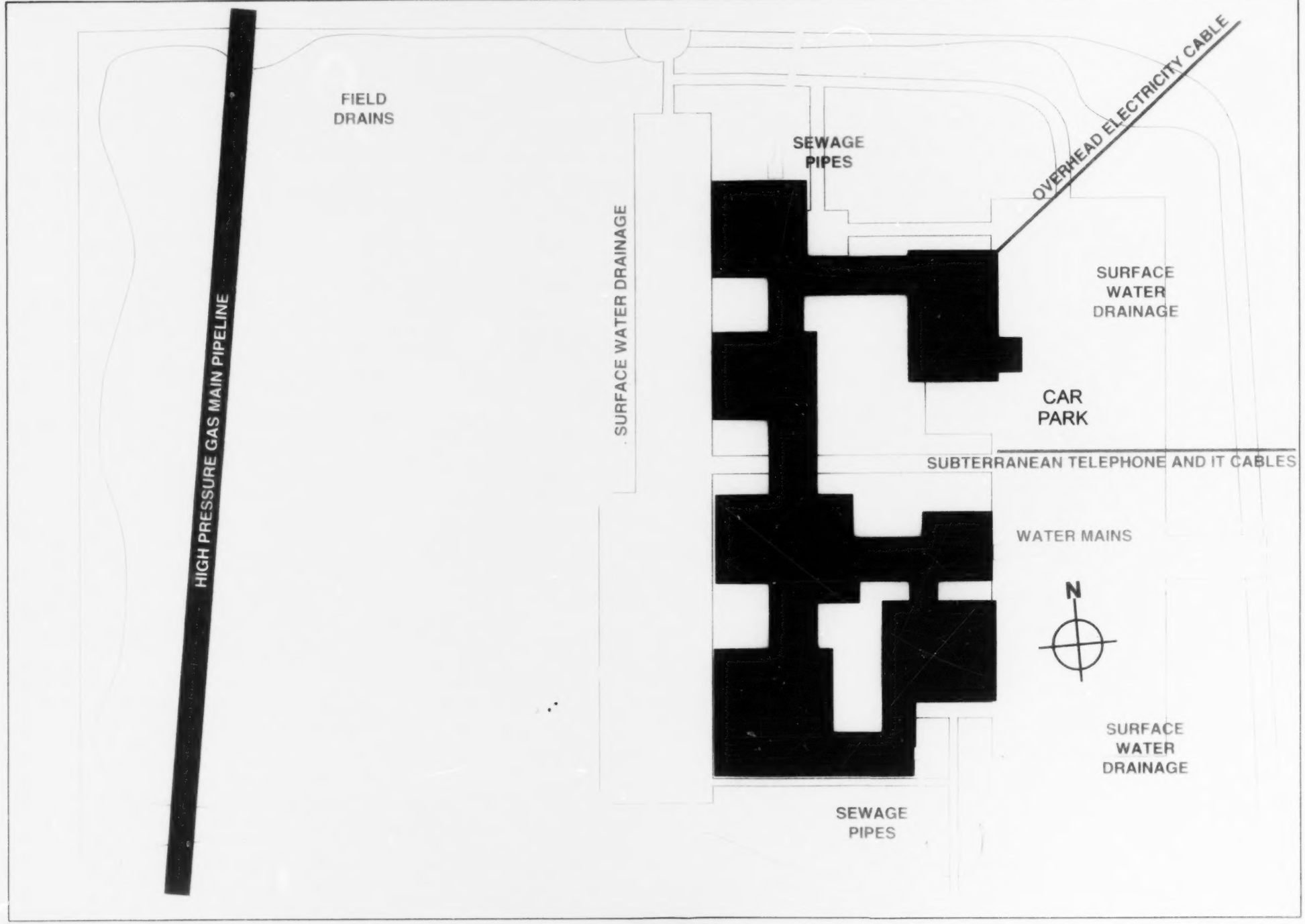

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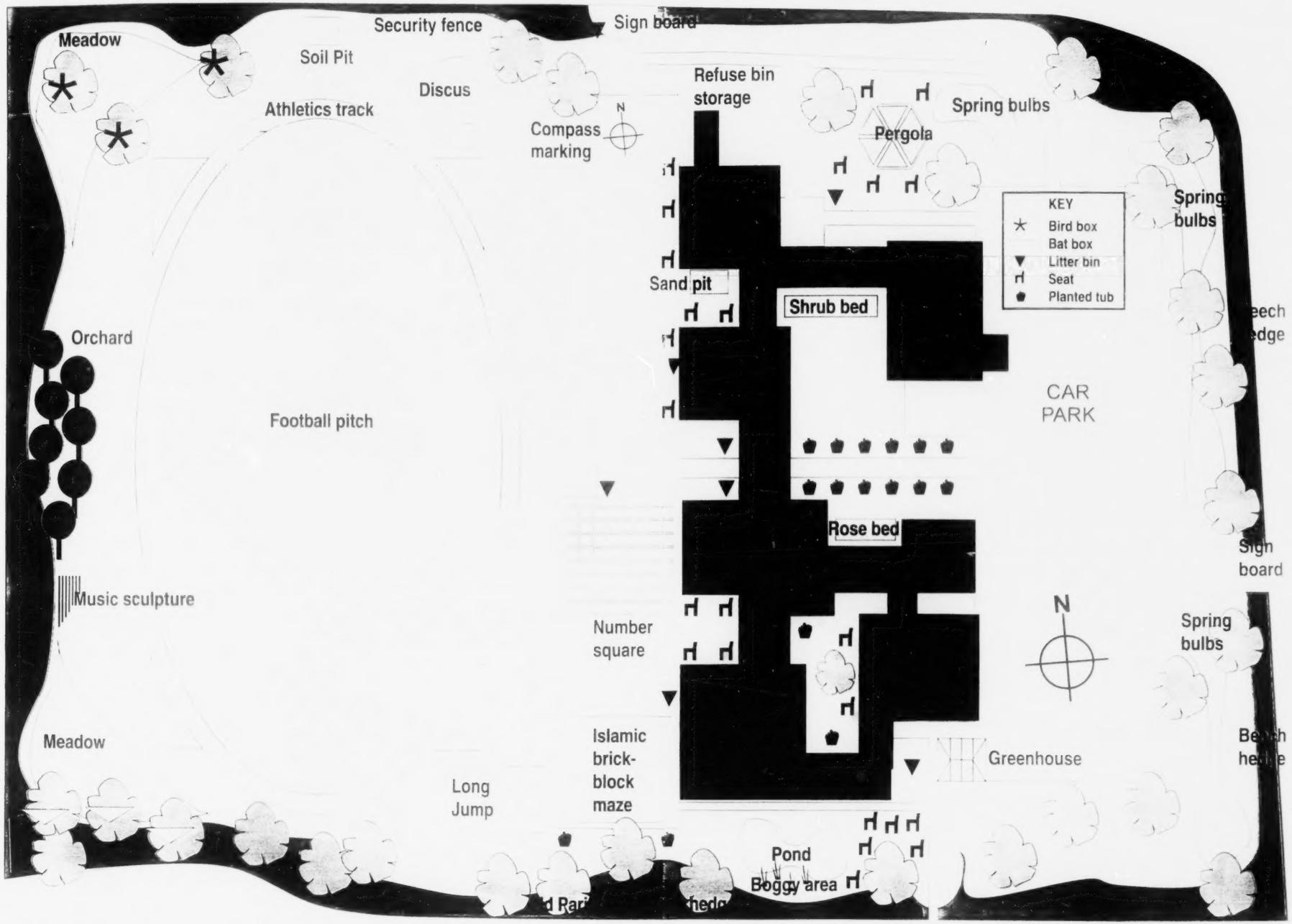
TABLE 18 **Example of school site plan showing features**



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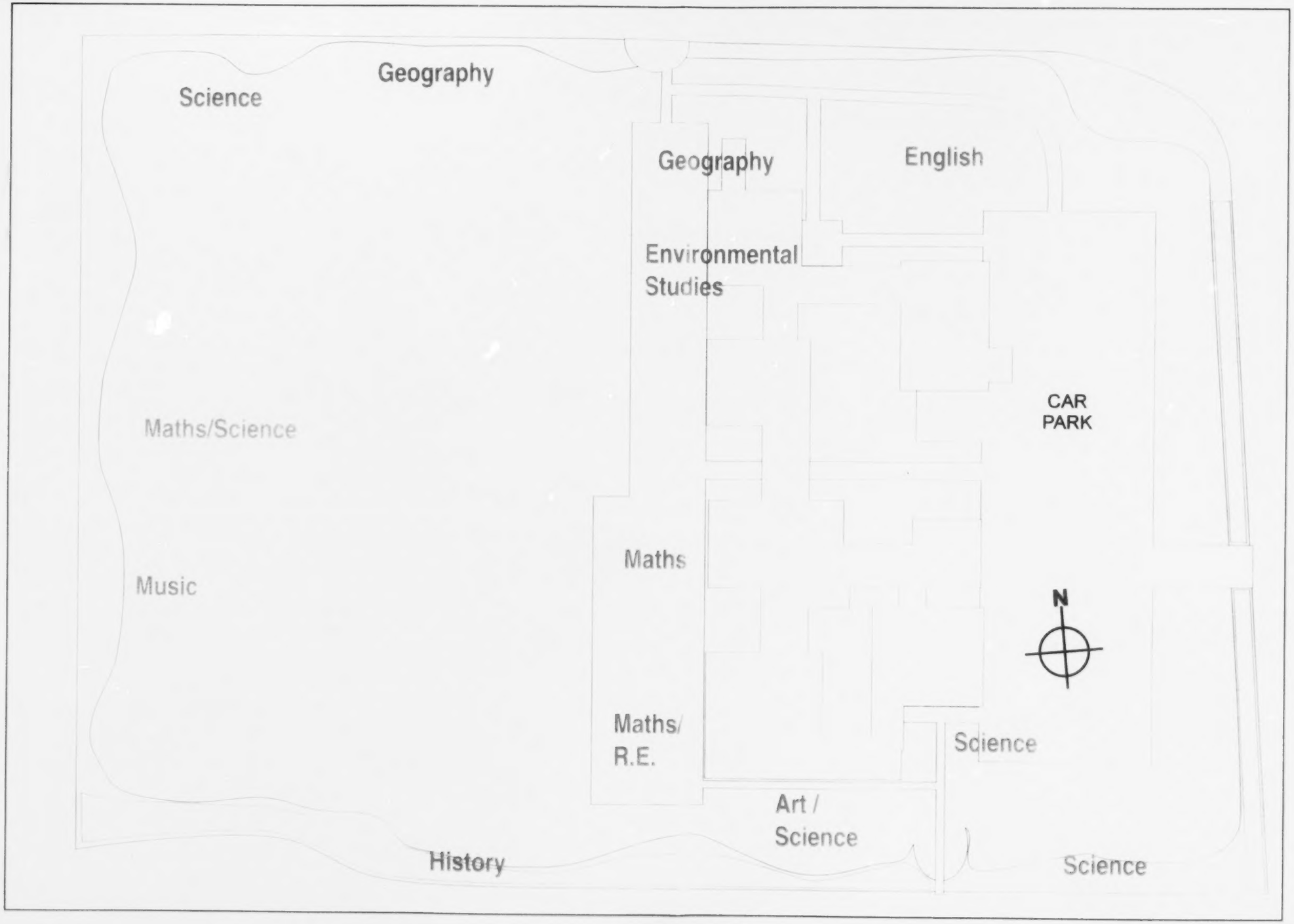
Science
Geography
Geography
English
Environmental Studies
CAR PARK
Maths/Science
Maths
Music
N
Maths/ R.E.
Science
Art / Science
History
Science

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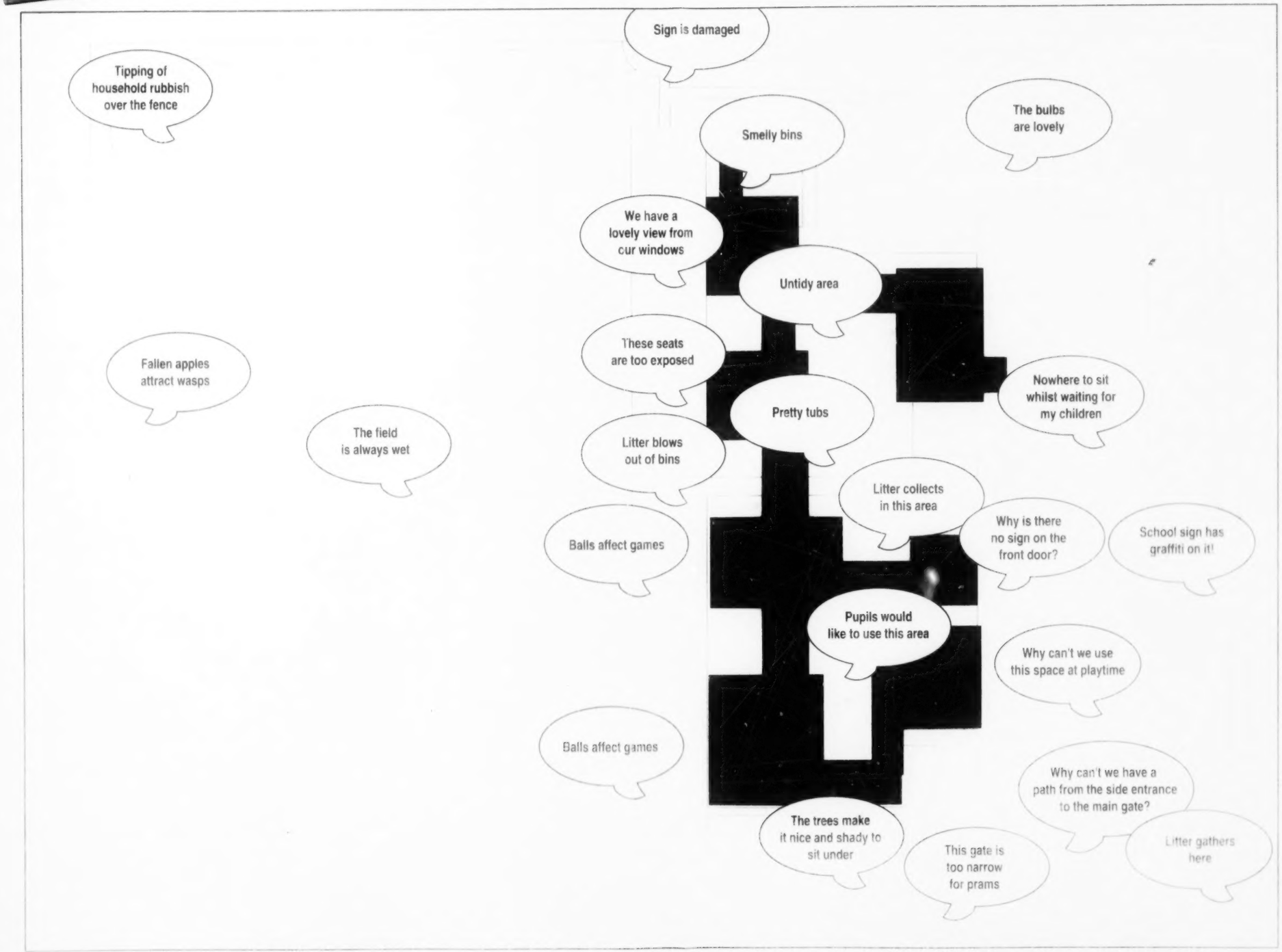
Overlay of school site plan showing opinions


Sign is damaged
Tipping of household rubbish over the fence
Smelly bins
The bulbs are lovely
We have a lovely view from cur windows
Untidy area
These seats are too exposed
Fallen apples attract wasps
Nowhere to sit whilst waiting for my children
Pretty tubs
The field is always wet
Litter blows out of bins
Litter collects in this area
Balls affect games
Why is there no sign on the front door?
School sign has graffiti on it!
Pupils would like to use this area
Why can't we use this space at playtime
Balls affect games
Why can't we have a path from the side entrance to the main gate?
The trees make it nice and shady to sit under
This gate is too narrow for prams
Litter gathers here

Useful publications

Esso Schoolwatch - School grounds and buildings: understanding the built environment.

Available from Learning though Landscapes.

Cost : £7.50 incl. p&p

A guide to the management and maintenance of school grounds, LTL/Southgate

ISBN 1 872865 12 7

Available from Biblios Distribution Services,

Star Road, Partridge Green, West Sussex, RH13 8LD. Tel. 01403 710971

Cost : £10.95 + p&p

A Guide to Fundraising for School Grounds, LTL/Southgate

ISBN 1 872865 20 9

Available from Biblios - see above. Cost £7.95 + p&p

The Outdoor Classroom, Building Bulletin 71, DfEE

ISBN 0 590 53034 8

Available from Biblios - see above. Cost £14.50 + p&p

Play, Playtime and Playgrounds

ISBN 1 872865 10 0

Available from Biblios - see above. Cost : £6.50 + p&p

Special People; Special Places

ISBN 10 947613 48 x

Available from Biblios - see above. Cost : £16.95 + p&p

School grounds: a guide to good practice. Building Bulletin 84, DfEE

ISBN (not available)

Available from Biblios - see above. Cost to be advised.

Useful Organisations

Learning through Landscapes (LTL)
Provides advice on the educational development and environmental improvement of school grounds.
LTL, 3rd Floor Southside Offices, The Law Courts, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 9DL. Tel: 01962 846258

Grounds for Learning Partnership (GfLP)
Represents LTL in Scotland and provides advice on the educational development and environmental improvement of school grounds.
GfLP, c/o Scottish Environmental Education Council, Stirling University, Stirling, FK9 4LA. Tel. 01786 466570

Association of County Gardens Trusts
Provides information about your nearest Gardens Trust.
77 Cowcross Street, London, EC1M 6BP.
Tel. 0171 251 2610

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)
Provides information about your local BTCV group and sells a range of publications and tools for conservation activities.
BTCV, 36 St. Mary's Street, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 0EU.
Tel: 01491 839766

Landscape Institute (LI)
Provides information about landscape architecture practices which may help you produce a detailed site plan.
Landscape Institute, 6-8 Barnard Mews, London, SW11 1QU.
Tel: 0171 738 9166

Royal Society for Nature Conservation - The Wildlife Partnerships
Provides information about how to contact your local Wildlife Trust.
The Wildlife Trusts, The Green, Witham Park, Waterside South, Lincoln, LN5 7JR. Tel: 01522 544400

Scottish Conservation Projects Trust (SCP)
Provides information about your local SCP group which may be able to provide advice or volunteers to help with school projects.
SCP, Balallan House, 24 Allan Park, Stirling, FK8 2QG. Tel. 01786 479697

Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT)
Provides information about how to contact your local branch of the Trust and SWT's educational initiatives.
SWT, Cramond House, Cramond Glebe Road, Edinburgh, EH14 6NS.
Tel. 0131 312 7765

Tree Council
Provides information about local tree wardens.
Tree Council, 51 Catherine Place, London SW1E 6DY.
Tel: 0171 828 9928

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Esso Schoolwatch Survey Pack

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